

BRAND NEW!

ROBERTSON BALLARD.

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BRAND NEW!

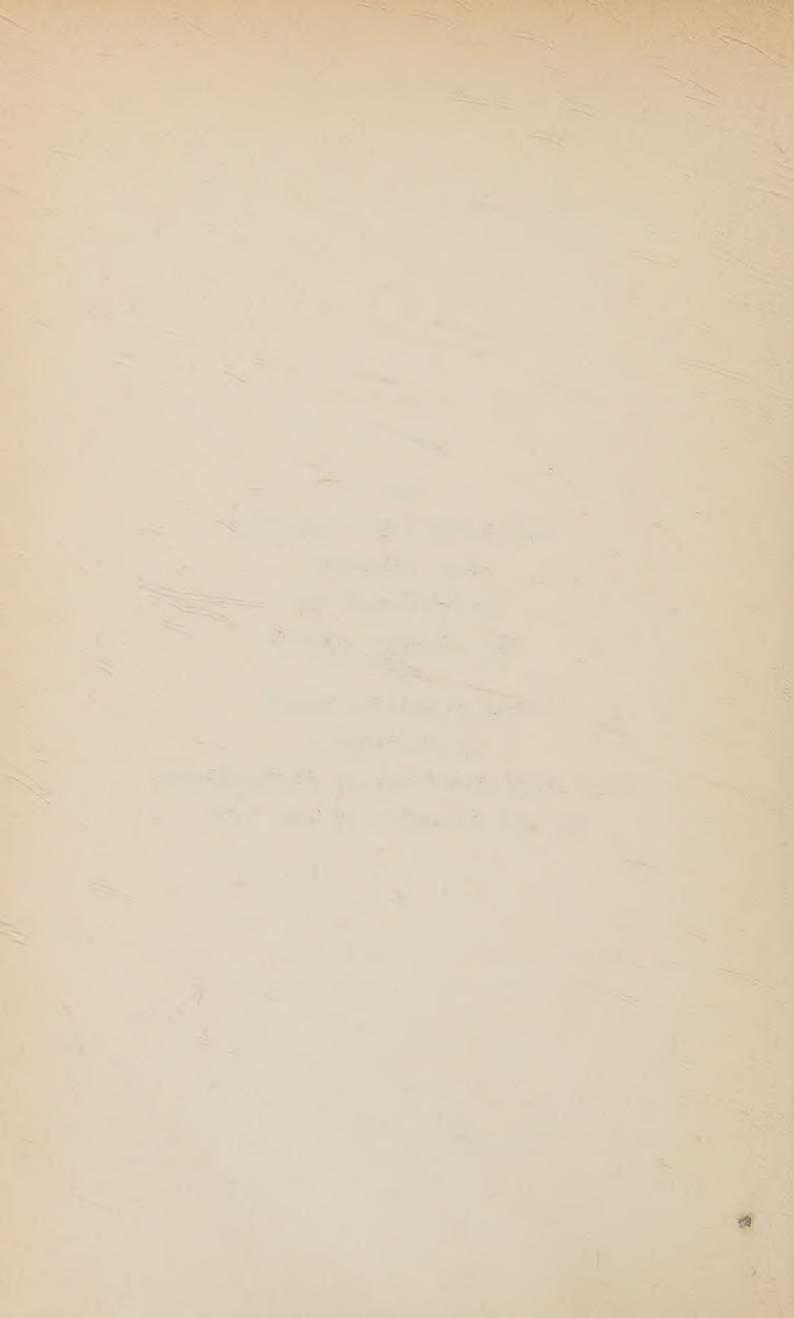
AND OTHER ADDRESSES
FOR CHILDREN

BY
ROBERTSON BALLARD

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TO
THE EAST END 'NIPPER,'
WHO POSSESSES
THE SHARPEST WIT
THE QUICKEST TONGUE
AND
THE TENDEREST HEART
IN THE WORLD,
WITH EVER AFFECTIONATE REMEMBRANCES
OF THE CHILDREN OF OLD FORD



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Preface

EACH of these addresses has been given to that most critical of all children's audiences—a Sunday-evening gallery filled with East-End kiddies. Their only apology for publication is in the belief of the author that they were found to be useful in purpose, and helpful to those for whom they were primarily prepared.

It is the author's earnest desire that they may be helpful and useful to other children in far different conditions of life from those to whom they were first given.

ROBERTSON BALLARD.

LONDON,

March, 1921.

Foreword

AS a nipper from South-East London, and therefore claiming close kinship with Mr. Ballard's original hearers, I want to thank him for the addresses, and to say to my fellow-nippers of all ages, 'Read them! They are allright!'

"Sister, we hate Children's addresses," said an outspoken boy to his big chum in the National Children's Home and Orphanage, and he spoke for boys and girls throughout the world.

But here is no Olympian, trying to think down to the level of youngsters, and dilute his wisdom for weak digestions; rather, a friend talking with his friends—a seer, too, who has caught a glimpse in the young lives round him of clouds of glory, and shares with them the Vision Splendid.

GEORGE ALLEN.

Brand New

A NEW YEAR'S ADDRESS

I make all things new.—Rev. xxi. 5.

EVERYBODY likes new things! They always seem to be so much more attractive and valuable than old things. Do you remember your new copy-book? Of course you do! We all had one, once upon a time. And when our teacher brought it to us, we all heard just the same thing said to us—"Keep it clean!" My own teacher used to say that to me every morning. I expect the colour of my hands usually reminded him! What a difficult business it was, just to keep our copy-book clean! The curious thing is, that even after we leave school, and finish with all our copy-books, and even write on unlined paper with a fountain pen—it is as hard as ever just to keep the page clean. When we come to a New Year, I somehow go back and think of my copy-book, long ago. Every New Year means that God has given me a brand new copy-book in which I am to write. Every page is a month. Every line is a day. Just as the copy-book was given to me and was my very own, so is the brand New Year given to me, to use as my very own. I have got to write something on every line and every page.

Every day of my life I am writing something. The One Great Teacher sees and knows all that I write.

What is the best way to write? Why! It is the same way as we first began to write on the first page of the very first copy-book we ever had. Do you remember how you started? You looked carefully at the *copy* at the top of the page, and you tried to keep straight on the lines. That is the way to write in God's copy-book of Life. Look at the copy—the Pattern Life that every boy and girl can see. Could you have a lovelier, clearer Example to follow than that of the life Jesus lived? Just look at Him. Think of Him writing the same kind of story day by day as *you* write in your life. *Is your writing like His?*

What is the best way to write well? Take a bit at a time, and just do your best. If you used long, dry, hard words to explain it, the meaning would be just the same. You used to make mistakes, and smudges, and black marks in your copy-book, because you tried to go too fast. You weren't really trying to do your best. Life's copy-book needs patient, careful writing, just as much as a schoolboy's brand new copy-book. Don't have things to rub out. Keep it clean from horrid smudges. India rubbers are useful, but the best writers never use them, because they don't *need* them!

Think of this brand New Year like you thought of your first brand new copy-book. The Great Teacher

in whose school we are all learning, knows our lessons are not always easy. He knows it is hard to keep our page clean, and to write so as to please Him. But He *does* help us. Every day and every hour of our lives, if we ask Him, He just guides our hand. He tells us what to do. He cheers us up when we are tired of writing. And the more we listen to His Voice, teaching and guiding us, the more beautiful will the writing on all our pages be.

Magic Aprons

Put on kindness.—Col. iii. 12.

DID you ever hear of the old lady with the magic apron? She lived in a very small house near to a huge bottle factory. Glasses, jars and bottles of all kinds were made there. Near to the bottle factory was a school. Crowds of boys and girls used to run past her little house on their way to and from school. How she loved to hear them and watch them from her window! She had no boy or girl of her own, and somehow that seemed to make her love them all the more. Nearly every night, the old lady fastened on a big apron, that always hung behind her door. Then she lifted the latch and off she went. Her journey always seemed to be in the same direction—right up past the bottle factory, as far as the iron gates of the school. Every now and again she

stooped to pick up something and pop it in her apron. One night she aroused the suspicion of the watchful night policeman. He soon overtook the old lady, and asked her in a big gruff voice, 'Now then, mother, what are you doing at this time of night? and what have you got in that apron of yours?' 'Never you mind,' she quietly said. 'But I'm *paid* to mind,' said the curious policeman, 'and I must see just what you've got in that apron!' Of course the policeman had his own way in the end. When she opened her apron, it was full of bits of broken glass—mostly pieces of bottles and jars that had fallen from the carts going in and out of the factory. The policeman thought he saw the joke, and said, 'I suppose you're going to put them in some mortar on your garden wall to keep the little rascals out?' 'Oh no!' said the dear old lady, 'I'll tell you all about it, if you want to know. You know the little boys and girls who come romping along this road on their way to school?' The policeman frowned his 'Yes,' for he had lots of trouble with their mischief sometimes. 'Well! when it's a hot day like to-day,' said the old lady, 'they leave their boots and stockings at home, and play in their bare feet, and if these bits of broken glass were left about, they would cut their little feet. So you see I love to pick them up, and throw them away somewhere, where they can't hurt any one.'

If you have ever trodden on a piece of sharp glass with your naked foot, I guess you'll soon say 'what a dear, kind old lady that grannie was!' But in the everyday journey that we all go, there are things that hurt far more than even that. Which do you think really *hurts* most—a cut in your foot or hand, or a cut in your mind or heart? Sometimes somebody says something very unkind. How it hurts! Grown-ups call it a 'cutting word,' don't they? A sharp bad-tempered answer, spoken in anger, goes deep, and gives a worse pain than almost anything else. Why! even unkind *looks* hurt dreadfully very often. But just imagine yourself wearing a magic apron—not a linen one that you can see, but an apron of kindness and sympathy that you cannot see. Wear it, and people soon discover you possess one, although they can't actually see it! 'Put on kindness.' Don't be content with *not* doing bad things. Get busy *doing* kind things. 'Go about *doing* good' like Jesus did, every day and everywhere. Pick up the things that would injure and hurt other people as they walk along the same pathway as you walk. Hide your unkind words, your angry looks, your selfish acts, where they cannot hurt any one. *Throw them away! 'Put on kindness' instead.*

Putting up Our Fists

Fight the good fight.—1 Tim. vi. 12.

Lo! I am with you alway.—Matt. xxviii. 20.

QUITE a lot of good people seem to think that God is only near them when they are in trouble or difficulty. But whenever I read a new life-story of some great and good man like James Chalmers or General Gordon, or some wonderful woman like Mary Slessor, I always seem to come across a big thought like this. *They* believed God was *always* near them. *They* felt quite sure that He was *never* far away from them. God was nearest of all to them when they felt they *needed* Him most. When our battles are hardest, He sends us just as much help as ever we need. When our foes are strongest, He gives us a greater strength still, if we trust Him. God expects us to fight our own battles. But He knows and sees all the struggle, and enters into it *with* us. That is a very hard thought for a boy or girl to understand. But I'll give you another thought that will help you to understand it better. When Jack was ill in bed, why! somehow or other, mother was nearest of all to him, doing everything she possibly could to help him, night and day. How gladly she would have borne the pain herself! She could not do so, but she did the next best thing—she entered into all his pain and trouble as if it were her very own. God does that,

'Lo! I am with you alway,' said Jesus. And unlike even the best mother, God is able to heal and help and strengthen us in all our battles. Let me try to make what I mean clear to you by a true story.

A little chap came home from school one afternoon bearing every mark of a well-fought school-boy's battle. His collar was torn nearly off. A blackened eye, and not a few scratches, proved that he had at least stood his ground! His tie had travelled round to the back of his neck. Mother soon saw all these things, and began to question him, just as your mother would do. She found he had been in bitter conflict with a boy far bigger than himself—a well-known bully in his school. 'Weren't you very frightened?' she said. 'You *ought* to have been! That boy was much bigger and stronger than you are!' 'No, I wasn't a bit afraid, mother,' the little chap answered. 'You see, Norman was *only just round the corner, watching*, and if I'd given a whistle, he'd soon have come round!' Norman was his big elder brother, who was far stronger and braver than he was himself!

When you or I put up our fists to fight a battle for God, and what is Right, He is always near. He expects us to fight our own battles, because that's the one and only way our *characters* are made brave and strong and true. But if wrong nearly wins—

and the Devil is always bullying as well as coaxing people weaker than himself—just remember *God is near*. When your own pluck and your own strength seems to be giving way, think of God being ‘just round the corner.’ You can’t see Him, but you can *know* He is really there. How? Trust Jesus! For the mighty Son of God tells us with His very own lips, ‘I am with you alway’—to help you, and make you brave and strong in every battle that you fight for My sake.

Putting up Our Sails

AN ADDRESS ON PRAYER

Thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.—Matt. vi. 6.

WHAT prayer is, and what it does, is not easy for boys and girls to understand. Even for grown-ups it is a difficult subject to explain, and the old preacher who said ‘the best way to find out what prayer is and does, is to pray,’ spoke a very great truth. Here is a story which helps one to understand what prayer is like. Several Chinamen were taking a missionary in a funny Eastern boat down a Chinese river. The current was very strong. The boat seemed to be just about as clumsy and heavy as an old canal-barge. Progress was very slow and tedious. Suddenly two of the Chinamen hoisted a

sail. What a difference it made! The heavy old boat seemed almost to have grown a pair of wings—in spite of the strong current. Soon the missionary, who had been watching, said, ‘Does putting up that sail really help you along? I suppose you’ll say it catches the power of something you can’t see—you call it the breath of heaven, I believe!’ One of the Chinamen answered, ‘Yes! the strong unseen winds carry our boat along.’ And then the missionary had a chance to tell him something that was well worth hearing. He said, ‘How ever can an unseen power make this heavy old wooden boat move up the stream? and against the current too! I’d like to see this unseen power so as to be sure!’ The Chinaman smiled and said, ‘Funny foreign words. Me not understand. But me just put up sails properly, and big boat sail straight on better.’ Then the missionary saw his chance and said, ‘I say! Haven’t you heard that we Christians speak to an unseen God—an *unseen* God, mind you! and ask Him to help us along, and make us better men and women?’ ‘Oh! yes! I’ve heard it. Does it make any difference?’ asked the Chinaman. ‘Now be fair, and just think,’ was the reply. ‘Does your putting up the sail make any difference at all?’ ‘Of course,’ said the Chinaman; ‘look how *straight* we’re going, and quickly too, in spite of the strong current against us.’ ‘And you say every Chinaman knows

that a sail makes all that difference. Well! everybody who knows Jesus Christ the Son of God, knows that He is our One Great Helper. He hears our prayers and answers us, and it makes all the difference in the world, even although we cannot see Him.'

Everybody who puts up the sail of his heart—for that is what prayer is like—knows that it *does* help. Our prayers, when we really mean them, just catch hold of the *unseen power* of God and His grace in our lives. He helps the little boats of our lives to go His way—to sail straight, and to go steadily onward. All our lives have currents in them which would drive us the wrong way. But we don't drift, if the sail is up. We don't go backwards either. But we go *straight* ahead! Our vessel moves steadily onwards when we really mean our prayers, for they make all the difference. God 'rewards thee openly,' for we see for ourselves that His power in our lives makes us able to conquer even the strongest currents of evil, and the fiercest storms of temptation. Think of your prayers like that, and you'll find they *are* answered. Put up your sails! Ask God to strengthen and guide you all the way of your journey. And even as you put up your sails and show Him you're doing *your* part, God shows you He will do His.

The Sacred Pearl

AN EASTER LEGEND

If God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.—I John iv. 11.

A VERY old and very beautiful Easter legend says that while Jesus was hanging in agony on the cross of Calvary, the terrible pain of the nails which pierced His flesh brought hot tears to His eyes. As they rolled pitifully down His cheeks and fell to the ground, one of them turned into a beautiful shining pearl. After the removal of the body of Jesus to the sacred rock-hewn tomb, an unknown disciple returned in great grief of heart to pray at the spot where his beloved Master had been crucified. In his sorrow he threw himself on the ground where the cross had rested, stretching out his clasped hands in prayer. And lo! his hand, which was wet with his tears of love, touched a beautiful lustrous pearl! There it lay, on the spot where the foot of the cross had been. The unknown disciple took the treasured pearl to his home. So beautiful a pearl was it, that he had it set in a ring of purest gold, and always wore it on his right hand. Never did he look at it without remembering the wonderful love of the One whom he had seen dying on the cross at the place beyond the city wall where he had found the sacred pearl.

As the years went by, the ring passed from hand

to hand, and from Jew to Jew. But the extraordinary thing about the ring which held the sacred pearl was not its beauty nor its value, but its strangely wonderful *power*. Whoever possessed and wore the ring of the sacred pearl grew to be kind and unselfish and loving—whatever their life may have been before. The grasping, selfish Jew became tender-hearted and loving. What a lot of truth these lovely legends hold! This Easter legend takes our thoughts back again to the very foot of the cross, even though we shall never see it with our eyes. And it is strangely true that when we go back in our thoughts to the sad and awful cross of Jesus, just like the unknown disciple did, we do find something that comes into our possession and makes us different—whatever our life may have been before. Perhaps we cannot understand many of the strange, sad happenings of those last tragic days that Jesus lived on earth. The long words which grown-ups use only puzzle us all the more. But when we see His cross with the eyes of our minds and hearts, and think of His pain and love, even a boy or girl can understand this:

He died that we might be forgiven,
He died to make us good,
That we might go at last to heaven,
Saved by His precious blood.

Remember the words of our text again also. 'If God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.' Not

even the youngest boy or girl can fail to see how much God must love this world when He sent Jesus into the world to die to save men from sin. There are questions about the cross of Jesus that no boy or girl and no grown-up will ever be able to answer. We know just a little more and understand just a little better as we grow older, that is all. But whether we are young or old, the cross means the wonderful love of God towards every human soul. Do you remember how the hymn ends?

Oh dearly, dearly has He loved,
And we must love Him too,
And trust in His redeeming blood,
And try His works to do.

No boy or girl can ever think of the cross of Jesus without longing to be and do just what the sacred pearl was supposed to do for the one who possessed it—to be full of love and kindness and goodness, whatever our life may have been before.

Jesus in the House

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?—1 Cor. iii. 16.

And it was noised that Jesus was in the house.—Mark ii. 1.

WHIT SUNDAY is a puzzle to some people. What does the preacher mean when he talks about 'the coming of the Holy Spirit?' Who is the Holy

Spirit? We know God—who made the world and everything in it, who spoke to Moses and taught all the great prophets. And we know and love Jesus. We could each of us write a life of Jesus from memory, for we have read about Him so often in the four Gospels. But the Holy Spirit is a Person we scarcely know how to think about. Let me try to help you to understand more about Him—for He is very real, and a real *person*.

One Sunday, more than nineteen centuries ago, about 120 men, women, and children who loved and believed in Jesus were upstairs in a room in Jerusalem, praying and singing with all their hearts. But most of them were sad and troubled. Perhaps you will know why. As their beautiful service went on, ‘suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing, mighty wind, and it filled the room where they were sitting.’ No one was afraid. But every one knew that something had happened, or better still, *someone* had come. There seemed to be a strange indescribable Presence in the very room with them. They were sad no longer. They were *sure* Jesus was near to them again, comforting, strengthening, blessing them. Then one of them stood up quietly and said, ‘Don’t you remember His promise? He would never break His word to us. He said, “If I go away, I will send the Comforter to you—even the Holy Spirit.”’ Jesus had promised His disciples before He left them, that

He would send One who would be to them all that He had been, as their Friend and Teacher and Helper. And at Pentecost on this first Whit Sunday, they knew He had kept His promise. The Holy Spirit is not in a particular time or in a special place like Jesus was. He is able to be everywhere, all the time—near and real to us, and to dwell in our very hearts and lives. That is just what our first text means. Who is He? He is like Jesus. He is all that Jesus was in the days of His flesh, but as it were, a Jesus without the limitations of the earthly ministry of Jesus just confined to Galilee and a few short years. He carries on God's work in the hearts and lives of men everywhere, and in all the centuries, if they are willing to receive Him—just as Jesus Himself did, when He first came to this world of ours.

Now have another 'think' about our text! 'Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?' Paul, who wrote the words, knew it was true. Jesus lived in *his* house, and he was quite sure of His loving, helping Presence every day of his life. Does the Holy Spirit live with you? God and Jesus are not two separate influences far away from us, and quite outside our lives. Jesus makes God very, very real to us, even though 'no man hath seen God at any time'; and the Holy Spirit makes Jesus Christ living and real to us even though we cannot see Him. He knocks at the door

of our house within, and asks to be let in to all our thoughts and feelings and longings. You have heard His gentle knock many times. Have you welcomed Him inside? He only enters if you allow Him, and want Him to do so. Boys and girls often wonder what they can do to make the world happier and better. Here is the one greatest thing of all. Let the Spirit of Jesus live in your life. Others will soon find it out. We can't all preach in pulpits. We can't all give a lot of money away. We can't all do heroic deeds. But we can all have His Spirit—and tremendous things may happen then.

A minister was one day talking to boys and girls who had just decided to follow Christ. He said to them, 'People round here don't read their Bibles or come to hear sermons to learn what God says to them, and to know who Jesus was. But I want you boys and girls to know just what they *do* read. They read your lives, and your characters. They watch you to see if you are really what you pretend to be—to see if you are like Jesus.' That is true. A great man called Emerson once said, 'What you *are* speaks so loud that I cannot hear what you *say*.' People will soon know just what you are if the Holy Spirit lives in the house of your heart and life.

WHAT WE SOMETIMES SAY:

(I)

‘I’ll Get My Own Back!’

All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.—Matt. vii. 12.

How often this saying trots out—especially when our temper gets on top of us! Nearly always a nasty bad-tempered word brings an equally unpleasant reply. And a kind word receives an equally kind one in reply. Begin the day in the morning with a black expression on your face, and a bad-tempered grumble on your lips, and you are certain to ‘get your own back’ before you have travelled far! But start off with a whistle and a smile—and you soon find other happy folk help you to ‘get your own back.’

I know a good story that happens to be true, and which preaches a better sermon than you will hear for many a day. Tom’s home was in a country cottage close to a wood. He was a spoilt boy, of a rather objectionable nature. Both father and mother were foolish enough to let him answer back whenever he was corrected—which he generally did very readily. One day he went sulking into the wood in

a bad temper. He had not gone far when he thought he heard another boy not far off. He shouted out 'Hallo!' in a rather nasty voice. At once there came an answering 'Hallo!' Of course Tom didn't stop to think about it, but it was the *echo of his own voice!* He shouted out roughly, 'Come 'ere!' The voice further in the wood replied just as nastily, 'Come 'ere!' Then Tom got very angry, partly because he didn't like to be spoken to like that, and partly because he always wanted to have his own way. So he shouted angrily back, 'Sha'n't!' No sooner had he shouted, than the reply came back, 'Sha'n't!' Tom then got so dreadfully angry, that he just told the horrid angry boy in the wood to 'Shut up!' And the rude boy answered back with just as loud a shout—'Shut up!' I think Tom had had enough of it by then, because he went home very sulky and angry, and told his mother there was a horrid boy in the wood, in such a temper, who had called him all sorts of nasty things. But somehow or other, mother seemed to understand. Isn't it wonderful just how our mothers *know* about things, without our explaining? She said quietly to Tom, 'If I were you, I should just go and find the boy in the wood and speak kindly to him, and see what he says then. Perhaps he'll speak kindly to you, and you could have some games together.' Off Tom went to look for him. When he thought he was

near the place he had first heard the other boy's voice, Tom sang out cheerily, 'Hallo! there!' Sure enough, such a kind 'Hallo! there!' was the answer. 'Come and have some fun!' said Tom—and the other boy seemed only too pleased, for he didn't take long to answer, 'Come and have some fun!' And the joke was that Tom *did* have some real fun, for try as he would, he couldn't find that boy. But when mother told him that his name was Tom Echo, well! Tom Smith knew all about it then! and he didn't forget it either.

Of course you know the old favourite hymn that begins:

Kind words can never die,
No! Never die!

They go echoing on and on, long after we've spoken them—and often help and bless folk we never even see. So the next time you say this saying to yourself, just stop and ask yourself, What do I *deserve* to get back? And if you take this great word of Jesus as a daily motto of what you say and do, well! you'll not only find you will make your own life very much happier and better, but you will also be certain to help other people as well. 'All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to *you*, do ye even so to *them*.'

(II)

‘Shut Up!’

Jesus said . . . ‘Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgement.—Matt. xii. 36.

THIS is a tremendous word which Jesus speaks in this text. If people really believed it was quite true, what a difference it would make to what we say to each other, and about each other! I think Jesus meant that we can never take back any word we ever speak—kind or unkind, good or bad. And every word we speak makes a difference in some way or another. It makes a difference to our own thinking. It makes a difference to the thoughts and actions of others. So that if this is really so, one day God *will* call us to account for even small, thoughtless words we sometimes speak so readily. We can never recall a hasty word, a chance remark. Let me tell you the story of how a good old monk once showed that truth to a village gossip long ago. Not far from the cave where the monk lived, was the cottage of a village woman who was noted far and wide for what grown-ups called ‘scandal.’ Scarcely could she open her mouth without an unkind slander. Evil reports about her neighbours travelled quicker than telegrams, if they once reached her ears! But one day, happy to relate, her conscience troubled her

so much that she sought the holy monk's guidance and help to cure herself of what she knew was so cruel and so wrong. Can you imagine what the monk said to her after he had listened to her confession? ‘Go,’ he said, ‘to the market-place of ——’ which was ten long dreary miles away, ‘and buy a chicken, the largest you can find. Pluck its feathers all the way back, and cast them aside. Then come back to see me again here, bringing me the plucked fowl.’ Greatly astonished, and wondering whatever chicken feathers had to do with teaching her to overcome her horrid habit of evil-speaking, she started off. She reached the market-place, did as the monk had told her, and came back to him very, very tired, and carrying the plucked chicken. ‘Now go back again along the same road,’ said the wise old monk, ‘and bring me *all* the feathers you have scattered. The winds of God are blowing fierce and strong this morning, but go and seek every single feather you have plucked, and bring them hither to me.’ You can just imagine what the woman thought and said. ‘It’s impossible! It’s ridiculous to even try! Why! ten women and ten monks together could never get them all back again. Besides, I cast the feathers *aside without thinking!* And the wind will have carried them here, there, and everywhere! How could I possibly get them all back again?’ Then it was that this wise old monk taught her the great truth

that Jesus meant in this saying of His. 'That is just what I want you never to forget,' he said. 'Every unkind, thoughtless word you ever speak is just like the feather you cast aside so easily. Words are scattered here, there and everywhere—sometimes hurting, troubling, saddening people whom perhaps we had never guessed they would reach. You can never get them back again. Keep your mouth closed against every thoughtless "idle" word. Shut the door of your lips. Imprison that dangerous "little giant" which you call your tongue, whenever he wants to break loose and run riot. Go and speak unkind thoughtless words no more.'

(III)

'Give us a Chance!'

Unto every one which hath, shall be given; but from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him.—Luke xix. 26.

I OFTEN puzzled over this text when I was a boy. Somehow it sounds unfair—taking something away from a man who already hasn't much, and giving it to a man who already has plenty! What does it mean? This! God gives to every one of us all kinds of gifts, and the opportunities to use or mis-use those gifts. Your talents may be quite different from mine—and your opportunities are sure to be different. But

we both have our own gifts, and our own chances of using them. If we make the most and best of what we have, God rewards us by giving us more and greater opportunities, says the text. If we ignore or neglect our chances, they lessen. If we hide our gifts they become weaker. How true it is! But the one thought I want you to remember is this. The more we *use* what we possess, the richer we become in our possessions. The more we use what chances and opportunities come our way, the more will they increase and multiply.

A capital story illustrating this came to me a little while ago when I was talking to a brother minister who works in some very horrid slums among the very poor. One Sunday he went away from his own church to preach at a wealthy church, far away from his sad and sordid slums. In the afternoon he went to speak to the Sunday school, and you can imagine he would tell his Sunday-school class about the poor children who lived under such different conditions from what they did. He told them of their dreary alleys, and their rare chances of happy times. Very few of his poor children had ever been to the country or the seaside. Then the minister asked every boy and girl who was listening to him, if they would try to help him to bring them a bit of real happiness. After a talk they hit on a plan! They promised to try to raise some money to help to send some of the

poor kiddies away for a day in the country. The minister gave every boy and girl a penny each, and they were to try to *use* that penny and make it into more than a penny in value, by the following Sunday. It was a splendid scheme, and it worked wonders! One little girl bought some wool and made two little mats which she sold (to mother of course) for six pennies! A boy bought four boxes of matches—this was when they were as cheap as that—and sold them round his family at a penny each. So his penny was increased too. Another girl bought some picture postcards, and of course she also added to her penny. But it was Tom who did best of all. I do not think you had better follow his example, or perhaps mother will blame me for what happens in your home; but you can copy his earnestness and his keenness—and he was 'only twelve' years old. He bought three oranges, and took them safely home. Mother was out when he arrived, which was just what he wanted. Into the kitchen he went, and boiled his three oranges! Presently three nice *large* oranges appeared out of that pan, and Tom had no difficulty in selling such fine big oranges at a penny each! With the threepence he bought more oranges—and repeated the operation. These also he sold just as easily, and when Sunday came round, Tom marched off, the proudest boy in his class, with three shillings and eightpence in his pocket, to give to the minister!

His little heart was nearly bursting with happiness because he had turned his one penny into such a huge sum of money to help those poor slum children.

Opportunities for doing good, and working for Jesus Christ are something like those oranges that seem to increase in size and value. When we say, '*Give us a chance,*' we forget that we all *have* our chances and our opportunities. The more we set out to use them, the more do they multiply. Try it and see. Look out for little chances. Make the most and best of them, and God is certain to say to you in your own mind and heart, 'Well done! good and faithful servant, because thou wast found faithful in a very little—because you have proved trustworthy in a trifle—you are placed over ten towns!'

(IV)

'Let's Give Her a Lift'

A TALK TO BOY SCOUTS

Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Jesus Christ.—Gal. vi. 2.

A BOY who even *tries* to keep the Scout Law is bound to be a far better, happier, and more useful fellow. When Baden Powell, the Chief Scout, first sat down to write it all on paper, I should think he knew what a tremendous difference it would make.

Just think of hundreds of thousands of keen smart boys of all sizes, and shapes and ages, scattered all over the face of the earth, and yet all of them out for one huge thing—to obey the Scout promise, and to keep the Scout Law. It is a gigantic thought, isn't it! And I believe that most Scoutmasters would say at once that the Scouts they meet and know as they trek along the journey of life, do genuinely try to keep the Scout Law. Did you ever think that this man Paul was the first Scout? He knew and kept his Scout law with a courage and manliness that very few in all the world to-day would be able to show. Here is part of his law. 'Bear ye one another's burdens.' And so that you cannot mistake his claim to enrol *you* in the great movement to which he belongs, he tells you where and how he gets that splendid law. 'And so you keep the law of Jesus Christ,' he adds. Yes! I'm quite prepared to say openly that I believe that the Lord Jesus would certainly want a Scoutmaster's warrant if He were in the flesh to-day. What a wonderful Scoutmaster He would be! What a troop of fellows He would have! This splendid law would be one of the biggest things He would insist upon—bearing burdens, giving lifts, helping hands. Quite lately I saw a good Scouting illustration of just the kind of thing it means. A very small girl (who was certainly somebody's little sister, I should think) armed with

a very large parcel, was trying to cross the road by the Bank of England. You know what the traffic is like there, at any hour of the day. No sooner had she just one foot off the pavement than she had to step back. Oh! the ’buses, the carts, the motors, the lorries, the bikes, the people! And the noise! The wee kiddie tried again to start across that terrible road! But again she had to step back almost before she started, as the Irishman said. And then it happened! Then I saw how the law works. A smart, whistling Scout passed within a yard or two. It is amazing what some Scouts can see. Of course there are other Scouts!—But this little fellow seemed to pause just a second, and then he went straight up to the little girl who wasn’t very much smaller than himself, and said something to her. About five seconds afterwards, he was stepping it ‘at the double’ across that road, with the little girl on his right arm, and her bundle in his left hand! When I saw it I don’t mind telling you I was glad I was a Scoutmaster, and I went away proud to remember that I had a share in trying to make that law *work*.

Not long ago I saw an even better illustration of what it means and how it works. I saw an old woman doing her best to push her little cart to the top of a steep hill. It was a boiling hot day, and the poor old soul looked very hot and tired. Her cart seemed to be about as heavily laden with bags

and baggage as a trek-cart when a troop is going camping! The hill looked so steep, and it seemed as if it were a stiff job for her to get anywhere near the top. Just as I was going to offer my help, two Scouts came trotting down the hill in precipitous fashion. They soon took in the situation, and before a slow-footed Scoutmaster like myself could get near enough to act, one of them said to the old woman, 'Now then, mother, let's see what we can do together. We'll soon give you a lift!' And each of them took a shaft of that cart, and almost before I've time to tell you, it was safely at the top of the hill, baggage and all, with the old lady trying to find her breath, a good many yards behind. That's how the law works. That's what it means. But of course it's a far bigger thing than doing a good turn every day, and undoing the knot in our scarf when we've done it. There are crowds of people round about us who have their difficult hills, and their little carts full of heavy troubles and worries and sorrows. Our One Great Scoutmaster says it's always up to us to be ready to help them, whoever or wherever they are. The real meaning of the law is to be always on the look out to help, to give others a lift, to bear one another's burdens. What a big difference it makes! How much easier the load is when some one says to us in His name, and for His sake, 'Let's see what we can do together.'

(V)

‘Let’s Give Him a Cheer’

They helped every man his neighbour, and every one said to his brother, ‘Be of good courage.’—Isaiah xli. 6.

I WONDER how many strikes and disputes and quarrels there would be, if men would only think and talk like that to-day? Not many. What can a boy do to help? What difference can he make to a greedy, selfish, quarrelsome world like this? Often we feel how much we should like to do some great or brave thing. We somehow feel sure we would have the pluck, if only the chance came to us. Such chances are rare. But the least we can do is to try to encourage and help other folk who have bigger and better chances than we think we have. We can cheer others on. It does make a difference if even ‘little’ people try to help the ‘big’ people to be brave and true. I wonder if you often think of, and pray for, the lonely missionary and his brave wife? Even if we can’t go to another country ourselves, we can try to help and cheer those who have gone, and say something like this text to them, ‘Be of good courage,’ faithful white man preaching Jesus Christ, so far away from home. We don’t forget you. We pray for you.

Once a terrific fire was raging in a big building in London. As the flames shot higher and higher, suddenly a little child’s face, white with terror, appeared at a window, one, two, three, *four* storeys

high! It never takes long for a crowd to gather in a London street, and very soon a large crowd saw the flames, and that terrified child's face. Presently there was a crashing of glass, and a voice screaming for help ever so high up and far away, it seemed. It wasn't long before a great big fireman started up a ladder of the fire-escape to try to rescue the girl. But a strong wind swept the roaring flames near him—so near that the top of the ladder caught fire and burst into flames. The heat was scorching, and the smoke so dense that even the brave fireman wavered. It looked as if it were impossible to rescue the child, and he would be compelled to return without her. Thousands of people looked on helplessly below, in terror and pent-up excitement. How everybody *longed to help* and to do *something*! Suddenly a boy right at the front of the crowd thought of a splendid idea, and before you could count six, he had carried it out. Elbowing his way through those who were nearest to him, he reached the nearest lamp-post, and began to climb. He soon reached the cross-bar at the top, and when he was safely perched there, he put both his hands to his mouth and shouted to the crowd—'*Let's give him a cheer.*' The crowd quickly understood, and three tremendous rousing cheers went up from hundreds of eager throats. High up, the fireman heard, and he also understood. It gave him fresh strength and courage. He clenched his teeth, and gripped his

fire-axe all the tighter, and vowed he would not give way. Up he went, step by step. Into the thickest of all that dense smoke and flame he climbed, until he was lost to the view of the crowd below, for a few moments. Did he win through? Yes! At last his precious burden was carried safely down, and it’s a grand story to tell, because it is quite true, for ‘they both lived happily ever after.’

Firemen, soldiers, missionaries, and people like that, are always fine brave men, we say. It is often quite true. But we can’t all of us be men like that. Most of us are ordinary folk living very ordinary lives. One thing is certain, however. If we cannot do great and brave deeds ourselves, we can at least pray for those who do. We can cheer them on. We can often encourage and help one another to do things we should never dream of doing, if we had not been ‘backed up’ by a cheery word or a friendly hint. Don’t envy the man who does the big things in life. Remember that we are every one of us really only small ordinary people, but we all of us have it in us to become big people, and do great and heroic things that are worth doing. Let us ‘help every man his neighbour.’ How can we do that best of all? Back one another up. Think and speak the *best* about each other. Have it always on the tip of your tongue to say, ‘Be of good courage’—keep a plucky heart! Don’t give in! You’ll win through!

(VI)

‘It doesn’t matter—much’

And he answered and said, I go, sir, and went not.—
Matt. xxi. 30.

THIS is a saying that is nearly as common as daisies in a field! Boys and girls feel that ‘*it doesn’t matter—much*’ what they say or do, because after all, they are only boys and girls, and because it doesn’t make very much difference, and—because a lot of other things! Stop and think about it. Is it true? Jesus taught over and over again how great and how big the ‘little things’ really are. He spoke of grains of mustard seed, of widows’ mites, of hairs of the head, of sparrows in the field—and He never spoke as if they were things that didn’t matter. Exactly the opposite. I wonder what He would have said if some one had asked Him, ‘Can a little boy or a little girl make much difference in the world?’ None of us are too young or too insignificant to do our share towards making the world happier and better than it is. And the way to do it, is to make the right and best use of what we call the ‘little things.’ It’s the little things of life that count.

Chicago to-day is one of the greatest and most important cities in the United States. Once upon a time, a good many years ago, a cow in a stable

kicked a lamp over. Over twenty-five thousand buildings were totally destroyed by the terrible Chicago fire which happened because of the kick of that cow! Hundred of thousands of pounds' damage was of course done, and scores of lives were lost!—all because of that little kick.

Not long ago, I was motoring across a tremendous stretch of moorland in Yorkshire. Wherever I looked it was about as dreary and barren a picture as you could imagine. Not a flower or a piece of gorse or green could be seen for miles in any direction. Why? A spark from a passing train had fallen in a conveniently dry bush, and set the whole moorland ablaze. Thousands of acres were burnt up, because of a spark! It is just the small things that are often so big and important. I heard a clever man once talk about 'tremendous trifles.' After I'd listened to him, I did not think he had been talking rubbish, but truth! Trifling little things sometimes make a tremendous difference.

When we *do* sit down to think about it quietly, it is just the small things that matter most. The biggest building we've ever looked at was built up with little bricks or stones. The mightiest piece of machinery we have ever seen consists of small nuts and screws and bolts, upon which the big wheels and shafts absolutely depend for their lives! The greatest responsibility that a man can ever take on his shoulders

comes to him because he has done the small jobs well, and been faithful in little things. When a man says, 'I go, sir,' and yet does *not* go—he never gets there later. He loses his chance. After arguing with himself for a while and trying to make himself believe '*it doesn't matter—much,*' he finds the clock has gone steadily on, and he is too late. Here's a sentence for you, easy to remember, and well worth remembering. *Don't delay—dreaming. Daily duties done decently determine destinies.'*

So if a boy or girl were to tell me there was not much they thought they could do that would make much difference, I should set out to try to show them that the biggest things in life simply grow out of what we sometimes foolishly call the little things of life. Words are ever so little. But what a huge power they have locked up inside them. Some of the very smallest and shortest words in length, have the very greatest power and the biggest meaning. 'God! Love! Sin! Home! War! Yes! No!' It's quite true, isn't it? So that when we ever speak the right little word at the right time and in the right place, we may be doing a big thing; and the opposite is just as true of course.

Yes! It *does* matter—a lot. The little things of life *do* count. Our little 'bit' helps in the big push—'you in your small corner, and I in mine.' If it is done well, it makes all the difference; if it is left undone, that also makes a great difference. Here is a

piece of poetry for you, that you can learn in about one minute. Say it after me, and you'll be able to take it away with you. It is worth remembering.

For want of a nail, the shoe was lost.

For want of a shoe, the horse was lost.

For want of a horse, the message was lost.

For want of a message, the battle was lost.

For want of a battle, the kingdom was lost!

And all for want of a HORSE-SHOE NAIL!

WHAT WE SOMETIMES SEE:

(I)

‘Wet Paint’

Be sure your sin will find you out.—Num. xxxii. 23.

A CERTAIN little girl I know went playing in the park. Like every other girl, she became tired of skipping, after a good spell. Seeing a nice attractive seat not far away, she ran across and sat down to rest. She had not been resting long, before she saw at the side of the seat, a small white notice-board pointing at the seat. Upon it was carefully written, two words. ‘*Wet Paint.*’ Up she jumped but—it was too late! There was nothing for it but to go home. Have you ever watched a fox terrier crawling home after a desperate battle with a neighbour? You do not need to be told what has happened! Have you ever watched a boy going home to tell his father he has lost his Sunday coat in the park? You don’t need to ask the boy what has happened! Have you ever seen a girl in her nice new frock, who has sat on a newly-painted seat, trying to make a long journey of it, before she arrives home? I leave you to guess what happened when this particular little girl found her

mother waiting for her. The stain would not come off. Mother said the dress was ruined—and a lot of other things I must not tell you. Soap and water scarcely made any difference. It was too late. It was spoilt.

The point is that there are lots of things in life that are just like wet paint on a beautiful new dress. God says, ‘Keep away! Don’t touch!’ Conscience says, ‘It leaves a stain.’ Wherever there is danger, God puts up signs for me to read, if I use the eyes of my mind and heart. He places clear warnings before me, which tell me to be careful, and think, and keep clear. The Bible, which is God’s own message, and the preacher, who is God’s own messenger, call it ‘*sin*.’ All sin leaves a stain, a mark, somewhere. Even a sinful thought damages. Even ‘small sins’ stain. Our text is quite true, and older people find it to be truer every year they live. Ask them for yourself.

Now many people do wrong things although they know perfectly well that this text is one of the truest facts in life. Sin carries its own punishment. The consequences of *all* sins have always to be faced, whoever we are, and whatever the sin. Why then do people fall into sin so easily, and so often? Let me tell you two reasons that have come to me as I have been thinking about wet paint. One reason is *carelessness*. Like the kiddie we have just been talking about, people don’t think. They go about with the eyes of

their consciences nearly closed. They see the attraction of something that looks nice, or enjoyable, and they go for it. There are plain signs of warning, but their eyes are glued to the colour and the pleasure of what they want. Afterwards they discover that the colour comes off, and the pleasure doesn't last. The colour stains. The pleasure pains—but it is too late. There is another reason. It is *curiosity*. After all, there was some excuse for this girl. It was such a jolly seat. Why should she not sit down? The devil fills our minds with all sorts of questions and arguments if we let him, when he tries to get us to do the wrong thing. One of his favourite ways of trying to get us to go his way is through the spell of curiosity. He promises us things that don't come off. When they do sometimes come off he gives them to us. But they *stain*. Coming out of my house the other day, I met an old friend clothed in a lovely new jacket. It was my old friend Mr. Lampost, who has said 'Good-night' to me rather dismally lately, because his old coat of paint was very worn out. He looked so smart and attractive, that an irresistible curiosity came over me to just touch him with one finger—to see if his coat was dry. Perhaps I wanted to see if it would come off. Perhaps I wanted to know if it would leave a mark on his new coat, as well as on my finger. . . . In any case I took no notice of the chalk on the pavement which said '*Wet paint.*' I touched him.

You've done that yourself, and you know what always happens. *All* sins are just like that—even small sins. Yes! Even doing things or saying things to see what would happen. Something always does happen. '*Be sure your sin will find you out.*' The next time you boys and girls see some wet paint, remember what a sermon it can preach to you, if you have ears to hear. When you see notice-boards in all shapes and sizes bearing those two words, let them remind you of God's own warnings against dangerous and wrong things. Let them alone! Keep away! Don't touch!

(II)

'Keep to the Right'

A 'TRUE FAIRY STORY'

And he shewed me that great city, the Holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven, from God.—Rev. xxi. 10.

ONCE, in the world of stories that *might* be true, a small boy was very much more unhappy than any boy ought ever to be. Everything seemed to have gone quite wrong. There was nothing for it but to run into the forest—and cry, when and where he was sure nobody would see him. He sat down under a great tree and his little troubles soon drove him to bitter tears. As he cried, his tears were suddenly quenched by the appearance of a witch, who held in her wizened old hand a little lamp. 'Why are you

crying? and why are you so very unhappy?' were the first questions she asked him. 'Would you not rather be glad and happy? Boys are meant to laugh, and be happy, not to mope and be miserable. Shall I tell you the way to the *City of Gladness*?' she asked. Listening to her words, the boy forgot what a remarkable stranger was speaking to him, and eagerly said, 'Oh, yes! do tell me the way. I'd love to go and find it.' 'Take this little lamp then, and set off down that path,' she said, pointing in a certain direction. 'But remember just one thing, *keep to the right*. If you go to the left, or take a wrong turning anywhere, you will find that *your lamp will flicker* and become dim. But if you go *straight on* and *keep to the right*, your lamp will always shine brightly, and show you the way. There is oil enough to last you throughout the whole journey. *Keep to the right!*' With the words ringing over and over again in his ears, the little chap set off. Through miles of forest, along lonely paths, over green fields and dreary roads—what a long journey it was! Every time he came to cross-roads, he said to himself, 'I must not forget what I was told,' and he kept steadily to the *right*. It was not easy to do that. Once he came to a gate on the left, and as he looked through it, he saw a lovely pool of fresh water, so cool. How he wanted to paddle! and to drop stones to make the rings travel across its looking-glass face! But he went straight on. Presently he

came to a steep hill. He saw a path across a field at the bottom of the hill. The path ran right round, cutting off the hill altogether, but it went to the *left*. How he wanted to take a short cut! But he took one peep at his lamp, and remembered. He kept steadily on. Further in his journey he passed a village fair. Nothing could have given him more fun than the music and the roundabouts and side-shows of the village fair, but as he drew nearer he found it was on the *left* of his road. He felt he *must* go and just have some fun for a little while, but he had only gone a few yards away, when his lamp began to flicker. Back again he went, and kept straight on.

It was a long journey, and many things happened to him. At last when he felt very tired, he saw far ahead in the distance, the tall white towers and golden lights of what he believed to be the beautiful city which he was trying to discover. Although it was night time, 'there was no night there,' for it was wonderfully lit up. How he hurried on! How happy he was when he actually entered the golden gates! The city was real, but everything within the city was just too beautiful to describe in any words. But I can tell you a little about the *people* in the city. It *was* a city of perfect gladness. Everybody was quite happy there. Wherever you looked, there were wondrous flowers and gorgeous colours. Birds sang their loveliest songs all the time. Children romped

and played just as all children are meant to do. There was no quarrelling, no rough words, no selfishness, no sorrow there.

It is a real city. Many boys and girls have started on the journey towards it. Many will find their way there one day, and they will discover then, that it is all quite real and true. The reason why the city is so beautiful, and why everybody is so happy there, is because nobody ever reaches the city unless they have kept to the *Right*. How can you get there? God tells me the one and only way—*Keep to the Right*. He gives me a real lamp. It is called 'Conscience.' It never fails to flicker or grow dim whenever I want to turn aside from the *Right* path. But every step that I take, going straight on, and keeping to the Right, brings me to a city of real gladness, where all is beautiful and good.

(III)

'Shut the Door'

Sin coucheth at the door: and unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.—Gen. iv. 7.

Be watchful: . . . the devil . . . walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.—1 Peter v. 8.

WHY do people shut the door when they go in and out of their houses? 'To keep out what ought not to go in,' is the answer, of course, you say. Sometimes great harm and damage is done by people forgetting

to just *shut the door*. Fancy a bank being left with a door wide open at night! Imagine a sweet-shop, ah! but I mustn't say more. I heard of a certain small boy who left a door open, and I want to tell you just what *did* happen afterwards. He did not even leave it wide open, but only wide enough to let somebody in with a squeeze. And somebody did steal in. It was a dwarf—a quite small and very ugly dwarf, who was just out to do any harm and mischief that he could. He kept quiet for a time, and let nobody know that he had arrived. Even the boy himself never guessed he had crept inside so daringly. Presently the dwarf lay down to sleep. He slept a long and evil sleep. When he woke up, and stretched out his arms, why! what a change! He was no longer an ugly little dwarf. He had grown up into a giant, but just as ugly and horrid and objectionable. He looked angrily round to see just what he could find to do. Now all the rooms of that house were lovely, and full of rich treasures, and precious things. 'Why should these beautiful things be here, and not belong to me? Why should the owner of this house possess such lovely things, and not I?' thought the giant. And the more he thought about it, the angrier he grew. Presently he said to himself, 'I know what I'll do! I'll just make short work of all the lovely things in this house.' Very soon he started to do so. He laid his ugly hands on the most beautiful things he could find in all that house,

and smashed them up. The lovelier and more precious the things were, the fiercer did he destroy them, and the greater joy did he have in smashing them—until the whole of that house was spoiled and ruined.

The house was—*myself*! my inside mind and heart that is filled with beautiful and precious treasures. The name of that ugly, horrid dwarf was—a *little sin*, so easy to let in! so hard to discover, sometimes! The name of that brutal giant is '*an evil habit*'—a grown-up sin.

Shut the door! Bolt it with your will, lock it tight! when even what seems to be only a 'small' sin tries to steal in. A lie may not seem a big thing. Bad tempers now and again are not supposed to be *very* bad. But let *any* evil thing creep in to your innermost self, and once it gets inside, it grows, and tries to destroy the very best and loveliest things in all the wonderful house of your heart and soul. *Shut the door!* —'The devil prowleth about seeking whom he may devour. . . . Sin coucheth *at the door*, and unto *thee* shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.'

BIG QUESTIONS FOR BOYS AND GIRLS:

(I)

Are Games on Sunday Wrong?

This is the day which the Lord hath made.—Psalm cxviii. 24.

MANY people are trying very hard to-day to convince us that there is no harm, and certainly no wrong, in playing football and cricket, or other games, on Sundays. They give us many reasons for saying it would do good, and some of their reasons are very serious and sensible ones. What are we to think about a subject like this? Ought all the parks to be open for pleasure and games, just as they are on Saturdays? There are quite a lot of difficulties that come to us when we try to give a straight answer to a big question like this, but if we think clearly and honestly I believe we can find out what is the true and right answer.

Think first of all *what our country owes to Sunday*. For most people it is a day of rest and quiet. All ordinary work stops, and even if people do not go to church, they at least spend this one day differently from other days. Folk who work hard all the rest of the week appreciate what Sunday means, as a quiet,

restful day. Many go to worship at the various churches to which they belong. Public worship is a far greater thing than some people believe. It makes a tremendous difference to the lives of hundreds of thousands of people every week. Our national life owes very much to the Sunday services of all kinds, which are held everywhere in Great Britain. It is largely through them that Britain *is* great.

If we help to turn Sunday into Saturday, we hinder public worship. We damage our national life.

Think next, *what we ourselves owe to Sunday*. Shut up all the churches, close all the Sunday schools for one month! and what a loss we should discover! As we get older, most of us look back on our Sundays as being the happiest and best days in our memories. 'This is the day which the Lord hath made' for us to remember Him. We owe all that is best in ourselves to the fact that we spent this one day in every seven, differently from the others—learning about God, praising Him, serving Him by developing a character that would have come to us in no other way.

If we help to turn Sunday into Saturday, we destroy one of the most precious things that enter our lives to make us better and nobler. In time, our Sunday schools would be destroyed. We ourselves would find it a very hard temptation to fight against. It would be easier to forget God. It would be harder to remember Him, and His goodness to us.

Think lastly, *what we owe to God*, and 'this is the day which the Lord hath made.' I do not think this text means that everybody *must* go to church, or *must* do all sorts of religious things just because it is the custom of one day in the week to be called 'Sunday.' I believe it means that God expects us to think of Him, and our duty to Him, and to those round about us. He gives us bodies and minds to look after; and He gives us hearts and souls to look after too. We need food and strength for both. Nobody grows strong and healthy without food. Our minds are meant to think wise and holy thoughts, and the Bible is the one greatest library in the world's history, where we shall best find them. Our souls are meant to receive spiritual strength, and the church and a simple reverent service is the one surest place where we may best receive that strength, if we sincerely try to do so.

Now try to put these thoughts together. If they are true and you agree with them, ask yourself this big question again. After all, it is better to ask what *good* is there in things, rather than what harm. If people would honestly ask what *good* there would be in turning Sunday into Saturday, they would find it more hard to give a truthful answer. The life of England would certainly not be made any better or happier by allowing games on Sunday, simply because we should be damaging things much more valuable to England's

greatness than all her pleasures and amusements put together. We ourselves would lose, not gain, by making less of our quiet English Sunday, for we should be compelled to sacrifice things much more precious than games and sports. This day is *His* day. We are more than just pleasure-loving people who are out to enjoy life. Strength of character, goodness, love—these are the things that make life worth living. Sunday is the one opportunity that everybody may use, if they choose, to make those things real to themselves and to other people.

Don't you think that is a straight answer? Don't you think that is the right and honest way for boys and girls to think about Sunday games? Yes! I am sure you do. Let other boys and girls know just how *you* think, and why, and you will be helping to appreciate one of God's greatest gifts in this life, and to use it as He wants you to do, for His sake, for your own sake, and for the sake of others.

(II)

Why is Gambling Wrong?

And they crucified Jesus, and parted His garments among them, casting lots upon them, what each should take.—Mark xv. 24.

SOLDIERS gambled at the very foot of the cross where Jesus was crucified. Can you imagine anything more horrible? What did Jesus think of it? Although

it was a terribly wicked thing *then*, will you believe me when I tell you I believe that it is just as wicked and horrible a thing *to-day*? There are many ways in which people gamble to-day, rich and poor, young and old. As you boys and girls get older, you are sure to find them out for yourselves. If while you are young, you really understand what gambling is, and what it does, you will be able to protect yourself from this dangerous evil as long as you live. One of the most horrible things about it is that people gamble over almost anything. They are spoiling clean honest games with it. They are turning honesty into dishonesty with it. Football, boxing, horse-racing, and other things, are full of honest enjoyment. Gambling is turning them into a shameful and disgusting thing to honest people.

What is gambling? It is using one's money in all sorts of different ways so as to gain more money on the chance of something happening or not happening before it takes place. Why do men risk their money like that? Mainly because of greed. Also because of the excitement and 'fun' that they say there is in doing it. Probably there *is* a lot of excitement and fun in it, but it is never like genuine excitement and fun. There is always a price to be paid. Some one always pays.

Why is gambling wrong? Because it is *foolish*! No gambler is ever better off—even if he wins more

money. Whoever he may be, or whatever he stakes his money upon, he always loses more than he gains, *in the end*. Perhaps he may win quite a lot of money sometimes, but he loses—a clear conscience. He risks a sensible, balanced mind for a few pounds. In the end he stakes not only his pounds and shillings and pence, but his self-respect and his will-power. There enters into every gambler's mind an irresistible spirit of risking and chancing, which grows stronger and stronger, until he finds he cannot stop. Slowly but surely it drives him, a step at a time, nearer a precipice called Ruin. Sometimes it takes years; sometimes only days or hours. But every gambler feels the spirit mastering him—until he finds he cannot resist. People are not ruined all at once, nor even because they sometimes lose. Gamblers are ruined because they cannot stop. They win—and it makes them want to win more, of course! They lose—and they feel they must try again, and go on, to win back again what they lost! So the gambler foolishly barter away his better judgements and feelings, and sells *himself*, in the madness of his own foolishness.

Gambling is wrong because it is greedy. A selfish craving for money is the strongest reason why men gamble. That is the greatest cause, though there are others. It is often an *easier* way of getting money than by earning it. When I tell you that more than £150,000,000 exchanges hands every year between

gamblers in England alone, you will know how great and how greedy an evil this is. It is greedy, because whoever wins the money has done nothing to *earn* it. To take or receive money for which we have done nothing whatever in the way of working to deserve it, seems to me to be very little different from stealing. It is greedy because whoever wins any money in gambling knows quite well that he is taking it away from some one—and without earning it, remember. There is always a *loser* as well as a winner. Very often the loser is a struggling, heartbroken wife or mother, who misses every penny that a foolish and greedy husband refuses to give her. Very often it is poor little underfed, badly-clothed children who pay the losses of their father's or mother's bets. The most tragic sight in the world is the inside of a confirmed gambler's 'home.' When once the gambling spirit has mastered him, from that hour his home, his wife, his children, are doomed to travel with him on a road that always leads to despair and ruin, in the end.

Gambling is wrong because it is wicked. If people would only stop and think about it, all the money that they possess really belongs to *God*. We owe our strength, our brains to earn it, to God, who has given them to us. What we do with our money matters to God, as well as to ourselves. He expects us to use our money wisely, so as not to injure our-

selves or other people. What happens when a man uses his money for gambling? We have found the answer to that question. When the gambling spirit enters a man's heart and home, it drives God out. Slowly but surely God seems farther away, and the Devil comes nearer and nearer, bringing with him other evil spirits which set out to wreck both the man's heart and his home.

Monte Carlo is noted for its gamblers and gambling, all over the world. Just outside the town is a large cemetery specially for people who commit suicide. Such a terrible fact as that scarcely bears thinking about. But it is tragically true. All gambling means 'suicide' of one kind or another. It is *foolish*, and means the suicide of common sense and decency. It is *greedy*, and means the suicide of unselfishness and love. It is *wicked*, and means the crucifying of Jesus again—for it is against God's will, and hurts Him.

Whenever any of you young folk are tempted to play cards for halfpennies, or to gamble even the smallest amount of money in any way whatsoever, stop and ask yourself what you are doing. If you are wise, you will *never* once give way—not even for fun or excitement. If you are true to Jesus Christ you *cannot* give way, and you will *feel* you never want to do so.

(III)

Is Drinking Wrong ?

Wine is a mocker.—Prov. xx. 1.

IF there is one thing I would put into the minds of boys and girls if I could, it would be a never-dying hatred of strong drink. I have seen so much sin and sorrow and suffering that has been caused solely by strong drink, that I am quite sure in my own mind that of all evils it is the greatest and the worst. If every one of the 130,000 public-houses in England was shut up to-day, wives would have new husbands, and husbands would find they had new wives. Little children would romp happily home to new fathers and mothers—and to new homes too. Instead—what does the drink do? It turns men and women into creatures that are little better than animals. It turns happy homes into vile prisons, where people are helpless and hopeless. It turns little boys and girls into unwanted, uncared-for ‘nuisances’—because fathers and mothers drink. Often thoughtful people ask, *why* do men drink? There are many answers. One thing seems sure. When *once* people have acquired the habit of taking strong drink, nothing except real religion ever stops them. They cannot stop themselves, and very often they do not want to do so. And every drunkard began with just a glass. The worst drunkard you ever heard about began by

taking just a little. All the ruin of his home, and the suffering of his wife and children happen because he began once. Think of the *wickedness* it causes!

An old country farmer in Yorkshire once got up at a Temperance meeting and said: 'I can't make a big speech, but I have seven splendid reasons why I have never touched a drop of drink and never will do so. These reasons are—four little sons and three little daughters!' Some reliable figures were worked out by clever men a few weeks ago, and those figures showed that three-quarters of all the cruelties done to little children in this country were caused by the drunkenness of the father or mother.

A well-known judge said in his court a little while ago, 'Every day I live, the more firmly do I come to the conclusion that the root of all crime is drink. I believe that nine-tenths of the crime in England is born within public-houses.' Words like that from a man who has to be so very careful what he says, have a tremendous meaning. Many people know that this is quite true—and yet we let it go on, and do next to nothing to try to end the one great cause of most of the wickedness and wrong in the country we say we love. Have you ever thought of that before?

Let me take your thinking-box along another path. Suppose all the money that was spent on drink was spent in other ways. Well! to start with, we should have £400,000,000 to use. Try to get an idea of how

much that means. Have you ever tried to count *one* million in bed at nights? Fancy counting a million every night for more than a whole year! Then tell yourself that it was 400 million *pounds in money*, that is *wasted* in buying alcoholic drink, every *year*. If the money was used to build nice houses, instead of slum hovels, how many should we be able to buy? A man told me a little while ago that the money England spent on strong drink every year was sufficient to buy 300 aeroplanes *every day in the year*! Clothes and boots and food are all expensive to-day, as everybody knows. Supposing a law was made to-morrow to prevent another penny being paid for drink, how much money would the fathers and mothers of England find they had for buying clothes and boots and food? In a year they would have £400,000,000. Instead, the money is stupidly, shamefully *wasted*. Think of the madness of it all! The nation pays this huge sum of money, and the liquor is drunk. What is *left*? It is all as completely lost as if it had been dropped into the sea. Stop a minute, though! It would have paid the nation far better to have put the money and the liquor into the sea. Why? Because we know quite well that we are really buying disease, and crime, and poverty—we are reaping insanity, murder, vice, because we have sown their seed. How the devil laughs at us!

Let us go along one more path, and think about

our question. I believe in getting boys and girls to think for themselves. Their brains are just as quick and just as able to discover right and wrong, as the grown-ups. We have thought of the wickedness and the wastefulness that is caused by drink. There is something else. It is the utter *wretchedness* that it causes. Go to poor houses or to rich, to wealthy suburbs or back alleys, it is the same. Misery, squalor, dirt and disease flourish, because men and women drink. Our prisons are full of people who get there mainly through drink. Our workhouses and hospitals just the same. Our asylums—and how pitiful they are!—are full of folk who, for the big majority, would never have got there if there had been no public-houses and no drink. People who have their money invested in breweries try to make us believe this is not so. They are lying. The devil puts more lying arguments into people's minds about strong drink than about anything in the whole world. 'Wine is a mocker.' Drink is a shameful, cheating thief. It has robbed more homes of their peace and happiness than anything on earth. It has stolen more money than anything else that money can buy. It is the one vile taproot that never stops pouring misery and wretchedness into the lives and homes of thousands of men and women and little children every day and week and year.

I do want to warn you boys and girls with all my

heart to have nothing whatsoever to do with this horrible, evil thing called 'strong drink.' Alcohol was never given to us by God to use as a drink. Its real purpose is for doctors to use as a drug, wisely and carefully, like other drugs. It is meant to use for commercial purposes, in a thousand ways—but *not* as a wicked, wasteful, wretched drink. Of course men argue that this is not true. They tell us things which sound so nice—they sometimes even sound true. But they purposely shut their eyes to the *real* truth. Profits in money can never make up for losses in homes and happiness and goodness. Shares in breweries always mean shares in wickedness and wastefulness and wretchedness, however hard men try to argue against it.

I do also want to warn you boys and girls against many of the things you hear, when people try to defend drinking. 'There's no harm in a man having a glass.' Perhaps there is not—but every glass makes it easier for another glass to follow, as surely as every minute makes the finger of the clock move! 'Can't a man do what he chooses without being interfered with?' No! he can't if he is a *man*. He thinks of *others* as well as himself. If he is a father, he never forgets his wife and his children. If he is a Christian man, he never forgets others outside his own home too. He has to be careful to avoid causing others to stumble. 'Can't I do what I like with the

money I've earned?' No! you can't quite do that, if you're anything like a decent fellow. Money is given to you to be used wisely, not madly. God gave you the strength of mind and body to earn it. They are *His* wages as well as your boss's. Whether we use our money wisely or not, depends on what we purchase.

Think clearly. Think honestly. Then you'll soon know whether drinking is right or *wrong*—and why. If the boys and girls of to-day face this big question in the right way, do you know what will happen? The fathers and mothers of to-morrow will see to it that this one great cause of wickedness and wastefulness and wretchedness shall not have its own way in the future. England will be a far better, richer, happier country than it has ever been. Make up your mind and heart that *you* will help, in any and every way you can.

Fairy Raindrops

A TALK TO TINY TOTS

And whosoever shall give to drink . . . a cup of cold water only . . . he shall in no wise lose his reward.—
Matt. x. 42.

ONCE upon a time—for that is the way all the best stories begin, isn't it?—the sun was very, very hot. It was such a scorching hot day that the face of poor old Mother Earth was dry and hard, and *so* wrinkled! All the trees were thirsty, and lots and lots of flowers were drooping their pretty heads, because they were so tired and thirsty too. But it happened that a tiny fairy raindrop peeped out of her little silver palace-window ever so far up in the bright blue sky. When the kind little fairy raindrop saw how parched and wrinkled the face of old Mother Earth looked, she quietly said to herself, 'I do wish I could do *something* to cheer the poor fading flowers. If I could only help just a *few* drooping flowers to smile and lift up their happy heads again, it would be worth while.' She was really talking to herself. But the little fairy raindrop palaces are built very close together up there, and one of her sister fairy raindrops had heard what she said. 'What

do you think *you* could do?' she said. 'Do you imagine that such a little thing as *you* could make any difference?' she scornfully asked. The kind-hearted fairy raindrop felt very hurt and snubbed, but presently she said to herself, 'Well! I might be able to kiss the dust away from *one* little thirsty flower, drooping its tired head.' Almost before she had said the words, she came out of her palace and ran tumbling down—down—down—*right* down to Mother Earth, and kissed a violet, and gave her a sweet refreshing drink. The tiny flower looked *so* happy and refreshed in a very few minutes, and her pretty little face seemed to smile a grateful 'Thank you!' to the little fairy raindrop.

Now the other fairy raindrops had all been watching! They pretended they did not see what had happened at first—but they had every one of them been peeping through their little fairy palace windows, and they saw what a difference *one* little raindrop had made. So very soon they *all* came trickling down, pit-a-pat, pit-a-pat, over the thirsty gardens and fields and hills. And the face of old Mother Earth lost her tired, weary look of sadness, and all her wrinkles faded away. The flowers looked refreshed and happy again, and even the great big trees seemed to clap their giant hands for joy. And they all lived happily ever after, because *one little* fairy raindrop had tried to do something to help!

Sometimes grown-ups think or say that *little* boys and girls cannot do much to make the world happier or better. Jesus never said so. I think He thought oh! such a lot about even *small* boys and girls. I am certain He used words that meant that they could help Him to make the world happier and better. He often talked about very little things as if they were very big things. Do you remember what He said about that poor widow who only had two mites to give to God? Do you remember how Jesus talked about tiny seeds, and little sparrows, and flowers, and herbs? Nothing is too small to make a difference. No one is too young or little to help to make the world happier and better. We *can* help this world to lose some of its wrinkles of sadness and sorrow and sin, if we try to live our little lives as Jesus did, and follow Him. Perhaps we often think there is very little that we can do. But if we do the little things of life well, ever so often they turn out to be *big* things, and make a big difference. Do you remember the favourite hymn which we used to sing so often in our nurseries? Let us say it all together once again.

Little drops of water,
Little grains of sand,
Make the mighty ocean,
And the beauteous land.
Little deeds of kindness,
Little words of love,
Make our earth an Eden,
Like the heaven above!

Gardening

. . . *The garden of the Lord.* . . .—Isaiah li. 3.

THERE are all sorts and sizes of gardens. Some are very beautiful, and well-cared for. Others are ugly and very neglected. I have been into tiny gardens where there was scarcely 'room to swing a cat,' as we say. I have also been into gorgeous gardens that were big and beautiful enough to be called a park. Very often you can tell what kind of people live in a house, if you can have a prowling round their garden outside. But there is one thing you can safely say about *all* gardens. They are meant to grow things! They are meant to be looked after so as to be worth seeing. *Even a small garden can be made very fruitful and very beautiful.*

I wonder if you have ever sat down and thought like this: God has given every one of us a garden to keep for Him. It is our very own garden. But really it belongs to Him. It is the garden of the soul, and it is meant to be fruitful and beautiful. Like every garden *it must be well looked after.* Gardens simply won't take care of themselves. Folk have to take quite a lot of trouble before a garden of any kind becomes anything like fruitful or beautiful. The ground has to be handled properly. That needs time, and care, and patience. The right seed has to be sown—and at the right time, and in the right way.

I think it would be a splendid idea if boys and girls had to do some real gardening while they were at school. They would soon discover some sermons that the soil and the seed would preach to them. If people just let things grow as they like, and allow weeds to flourish, any garden soon becomes ruined, and looks like a wilderness. It is just like that in the garden of a boy's or girl's life. In our soul-gardens, we have to pull up weeds of sinful seed-habits. If we are too lazy or forgetful to do it, well! they choke the good seed. They over-run the place and spoil the whole garden, perhaps more quickly than we realize. Preparing, sowing, watching—those are the things that really matter when one wants a fruitful or a beautiful garden of any kind.

There is something else nearly as important as anything we try to do to a garden inside, and that is to *protect it properly from the outside*. You have got to see that it is well enclosed. Why do people put up walls and fences round their gardens? If you have ever walked into a garden a few minutes after a cow has strayed there, on the look-out for its breakfast, you'll know the answer at once. Fences, and walls and gates are put up to keep out everything that is not meant to be there. Certain kinds of dogs seem to be most at home if they can scratch up a really pretty flower-bed! Hens can cause nearly as much harm, and of course boys and girls—but I

must not say more! In our soul-gardens, God tells us to put up walls and fences for exactly the same reason—to protect our garden from harm and destruction.

One of the best walls is called Prayer. Good Thoughts are a strong protection. Another is Right Friendships. There are quite a lot of real helps that safeguard the beauty and the fruitfulness of our own soul-gardens, if we think about it.

So if you want to do gardening of any kind, you have to keep one eye on the inside, and one eye on the outside. Sow seeds of unselfishness and love—give them a chance to grow, protect them from weeds of selfishness and greed; and as sure as anything, they will grow, and your garden will be filled with the loveliest flowers of happiness and usefulness.

Yes! *all* gardens belong to God. They are all meant to be fruitful and beautiful. He is the Great Gardener whose hand makes all the beauty and all the usefulness that is to be found in any garden in the world. And if the words of Jesus are true, God knows when we try to look after our garden, and sow the good seed, and protect what we try to sow in our heart's garden. Say this little verse over twice, and it will be sown in your memory:

To His little sowers,
Working one by one,
At the day of harvest,
Christ shall say, 'Well done!'

The Prince's Garden

Go and do thou likewise.—Luke x. 37.

A CERTAIN very wealthy Prince in a far-off land, to whom almost everything that money could buy belonged, valued one thing above all others. Encircling his gorgeous palace was a garden so beautifully set out, that merely to walk in it was a joy. Every kind of fruit, flower, and tree seemed to be found there. How proud the Prince was of his wonderful garden! His one happiness was to make fresh discoveries of the beauties of the friends who lived such happy and useful lives in his garden. And indeed they *were* his friends, for they so cheered him up. He never met them without feeling a happier and better man for being in the company of his flowers and trees. One bright summer morning he imagined all the flowers and trees seemed to be looking at him as if they were anxious to speak to him! The closer he watched them, the more it seemed to him that everything was trying to tell him something. Presently he went up to a peach-tree and said, 'What are you doing for me in my garden?' Sure enough there was a rustling in the branches of the beautiful outstretched arms, and a quiet voice said, 'In the spring I give you my blossoms, and fill the air with fragrance, and on my boughs hang gorgeous fruits which men gather and carry into your

palace for your table.' 'Well done!' said the Prince. A little farther on he came to a giant oak-tree standing up in all its majesty and strength. 'What are *you* doing in my garden?' he asked. 'I make nests for the birds in my branches, and I stretch out my huge arms and shelter the cattle which come to rest beneath my shade.' 'Well done!' said the Prince. Then he went down into his lovely green meadow where the grass was just like a wonderful green carpet, fresh and beautiful to see. 'What is the use of grass to me?' he thought. Each blade of grass seemed to wave its tiny arm and to say, 'Oh Prince, we give up our very lives for you. Your sheep and cattle feed on us, and we nourish them for you. Each one of us helps to make your lovely green carpet bright and beautiful while we live. And when we die, we give ourselves to you for your cattle.' 'Ah! I had not thought of that,' said the Prince quietly to himself. 'Well done, little blades of grass!' He turned towards his palace and was just going in, when he heard a timid little voice that seemed to say to him, 'Won't you notice us?' He looked to see where the whisper came from, and bent down to hear the voice of a sweet little bundle of daisies nestling together. They said to him, 'Oh Prince, we are not much use to you in your garden. We cannot make a nesting-place for the birds. Our arms are not big enough. We cannot shelter your cattle. We cannot

even give ourselves as food for your sheep and cows—they do not like us to live in the meadow. All we can do is just to stand straight up, and be the brightest and best little daisies that we can, and make this corner of your garden look happy and cheerful!’ The Prince bent down and kissed the nearest daisy and said, ‘Well done, pretty little daisy! There is nothing in my garden could do more than that. You do stand up straight, and look bright, and make the best of your little selves.’

The world in which we live is one which needs every giant tree and every humble daisy to make it beautiful. In a big garden, little things are often just as useful and just as beautiful as big things. God wants the little people who humbly hide in corners of His garden to just *stand up straight and make the very best of themselves*. It is often very hard to do even that. But it makes all the difference. So the next time you see a cheery little daisy lifting up its pretty little face and making the best of itself in a quiet corner, ‘go and do thou likewise.’ And as you try to do it day by day, as sure as anything, you will hear a lovelier voice than any prince say to you, ‘Well done!’ It is the King’s voice, and His name is King Jesus.

God's Lamp

Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.—Psalm cxix. 105.

WHOEVER the man was who wrote this long Psalm, he was a man who knew much about God, and much about man also. I imagine he had had many and strange experiences of all kinds, and if you read it slowly, a verse at a time, I think you will soon discover why I think this was so. But in all his adventures on the journey of life he says that he has never been lost, never been without guidance and hope—and light. One thing had always helped him. It is what he calls 'Thy Word.' Now this man wrote hundreds of years before there ever was a Bible such as we have to-day, and hundreds of years before even Jesus came. Probably he was meaning part of the Old Testament writings that come at the very beginning of our Bibles. When he read passages from those writings, and thought about them, they never failed to help him. He always found guidance and cheer and light! for that is exactly what a lamp is for. It is to shed light, to guide, to guard, to cheer! This man calls 'God's Book' a *lamp*, a *light*, because it *does* guard our feet on the path of life. Did you ever think about it like that? Do you remember one of the names by which Jesus described Himself, long after this man wrote these words? He said, 'I am the

light of the world.' He is God's light that shines for all men and all time out of God's lamp which is God's Book. God's Light, shining clearly from God's Lamp, is the only real guide that can lead us every day of our lives, and everywhere we go. It is the one and only lamp to guard us against evil, and to guide our wandering feet away from sin. There are evil things as well as good things all round our lives. There are sinful things which would rob us of all that is highest and best in us, and if we let them, they would steal those things that we most treasure in our characters.

A jeweller once showed me some very beautiful diamonds in his possession. He let me hold in my hands a wonderful pearl necklace that was worth ten thousand pounds! I told him I should not like to look after such costly valuables, 'but I suppose you always carry a loaded revolver with you,' I said. 'I expect you keep a bulldog in your shop at night!' Whatever do you think he said to me in reply? 'Oh no! I never have kept a bulldog in my shop to protect my jewels. I leave a *light* burning all the time. And no thieves like a light! Burglars much prefer darkness.' Then I remembered that passage in the Bible which says, 'Men love darkness rather than the light, when their deeds are evil.' It is all so true and so real. If you and I have the love of God 'shed abroad' like a bright warm light in our hearts, evil things cannot enter our lives. If you and I have the

Light of the World dwelling in us, sinful things cannot come in. No thieves can possibly steal the best and most precious things in our lives and characters.

How can a boy or girl see that Light? *Use the lamp*, is the simple answer. Read your Bible with this one big thought in your mind, 'Thy Word *is* a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.' If you quietly and thoughtfully read even just five or six verses out of the New Testament every day of your lives, the light of God's Truth about everything to do with your whole life, shines clearer and clearer in your mind and heart. Try it earnestly, and the Lamp never fails. The Light never becomes dim, but shines brighter and clearer every time you take hold of it and let it guide your feet, and light up the pathway for you.

Man's Lamp

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see . . .—Matt. v. 16.

WE are so used to brightly-lit streets and houses to-day, that it is hard to understand how people used to manage without gas and electricity as they did not many years ago. There were not even street lamps until the eighteenth century, and coal-gas was not used until the nineteenth century. The streets of

London must have been very dark and dangerous a few centuries ago. Think of the difference to-day! Do you know what they used to do in the days when there were no street lamps? They used queer-looking oil-lamps stuck up on poles. There were very few of these, and they hung them up outside churches and inns, and at the corners of the main streets. Every day at sunset the town crier went round shouting, 'Hang your lamps out! Let your light shine!' and everybody knew just what was expected of them—and they did it, for their own sakes, and for the sake of other folk as well.

When Jesus said, 'Let your light so shine before men that they may see,' He meant just the same as the town crier. If we follow Him, other folk must know about it. It is not good enough just to come to church and enjoy ourselves and feel happier and better because we have sung some lovely hymns or heard a good sermon. We have to 'hang our lamps out.' There is any amount of darkness round about us. If we have the light of God's truth and God's love in our own hearts, we have to 'let our light so shine before men, that *they* may see.'

How can it be done? There is only one way for each of us, whoever we are, or wherever we go. *Live like Jesus Christ did.* If a boy or girl keeps on asking himself or herself, 'what would Jesus do?' in all the difficult things that come to them in their

lives, what happens? This. They become like Him. Their lives have less and less of what is wrong in them, and more and more of what is right and true in them. His light shines through the lamp of their very thoughts, and words, and acts—and *others can't help seeing it!* Of course, it's hard. But after all, it is the *real* thing. Being a Christian doesn't mean giving a lot of money away. It doesn't mean going to any church three times on a Sunday. It doesn't mean pretending *anything*, but it *does* mean letting your light shine, and driving the darkness away. Jesus went to the synagogue many times. Yes! but we also know how He 'went about doing good' outside the synagogues too. When people came near to Him, however troubled or dark their lives were, they felt the warmth of God's love, and saw the light of God's truth. Why? Because it was in His own inner heart and life, and He ever and always let His light shine before men. Follow Him! People round about us soon see and know if we let our light shine. One of the loveliest little stories I know is about a great preacher. One winter Sunday night he had left his church and was going home feeling very tired. As he passed down a certain street, he found two shivering little newspaper boys sitting on a doorstep with a bundle of unsold newspapers between them. 'Well! my little men,' he kindly said to them with a smile, 'aren't you very cold there?' They were not used to

being spoken to so kindly, and they rarely had a shining sixpence put into their hands like this kind-hearted man gave to them. What do you think they answered? 'We *was* cold, sir, *until you came.*'

That's what our text means—letting people know and feel the warmth of our love wherever we go. 'Let your light so shine before men, that they may see' . . . 'Go about *doing* good.'

How Christianity First Came to Us

A FOREIGN MISSIONARY ADDRESS

Jesus said, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel (good tidings) to every creature.—Mark xvi. 15.

IT was soon after the Romans conquered Britain that the name of Jesus was first heard in this country of ours. Every boy and girl knows the date when Julius Cæsar landed here, so it is easy to remember when the gospel was first heard in Great Britain. Some people believe that Paul perhaps came here. We know he travelled as far as Spain to preach Jesus. But there is no proof that he came as far as Britain, and most people think it improbable. Not long after the death of Paul, Ethelbert was King of Britain. To his court one day there came a strange foreign embassy from across the seas. They were led by a monk named Augustine, who had a band of missionaries with him from Rome. The reason why they had travelled so

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far (and travelling was a very different thing in those days from what it is to-day!) was because of a remarkable incident that had happened nearly twenty years before. Another pious old monk named Gregory had seen in the market-place of Rome a lot of British boys who were on sale as slaves. They were attractive little chaps, with light hair and complexion, and their blue eyes and bright faces made a striking impression, because of the contrast to the dark hair and dark skin of the Italian boys. Gregory went up to the slave owner as soon as he saw them, to ask, 'Who are those boys?' 'They are heathen Angles,' gruffly answered the man. 'Not Angles, but *Angels*,' said Gregory. 'Where do they hail from?' 'They have been carried over from the land of Deira,' answered the slave-dealer. Now that strange name 'Deira' is really a Latin phrase, 'Dei ira,' which means land of 'the wrath of God.' It was one of the earliest names by which Britain was known to other countries across the seas. 'These angels must be brought away from Deira, and know and love Him whom we know,' said Gregory. Years afterwards, the good monk became Pope, and he never forgot his vow that he would remember the Angles. He sent Augustine, and a band of other monks with him, because he could not come himself. They came to preach the gospel of Jesus, and to try to win pagan Britain for Christ. Landing in Kent, they were met

and welcomed by King Ethelbert himself, for he had married a Christian wife, and was himself a disciple of Jesus Christ. They walked through Kent, preaching in the villages to everybody who would listen to their new message, until they came to the lovely old town of Canterbury. There these first missionaries built a little church which was really a very tumble-down place, but which afterwards became the wonderful and beautiful Cathedral that perhaps you have seen at Canterbury. The men and women of Kent were soon influenced by the lives and words of these Christian missionaries, and very many were converted. Augustine stayed on, teaching and preaching, and became Archbishop of Canterbury. He lived such a splendid life that people called him Saint Augustine, and he is known by that name to-day. Gradually Christianity spread far and wide, and the Good Tidings were heard in every corner of Great Britain. Slowly but surely this land of ours became a Christian country in name if not in deed, and we to-day enter into the heritage of those who first brought the gospel of Jesus to us.

China, India, Africa, and many other great parts of God's world, with all their millions of people, are to-day just like what *we* once were. They have not heard. They do not know. 'How shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach, except they be sent?' said the great and

brave missionary Paul. Every single penny that a boy or girl can give or collect for Foreign Missions *helps* to let the preacher go and tell the Great News. If you ask yourself what this country of ours would be like without religion, well! it is a terrible answer even to think about. Imagine England without any churches, or Bibles, or Sunday schools! without hospitals and asylums and homes—and all the thousands of other things that make us such a wonderful country *because we are a Christian country!* Then you will soon bring yourself to see the great debt we owe to those who have not what we have, and know not what we know. And you will long to do something for *their* sakes, as well as for the sake of the One who said ‘Go ye . . . and preach the gospel to *every* creature.’

Star Followers

A CHRISTMAS ADDRESS

And lo! the star, which the wise men saw in the east, went before them. . . .—Matt. ii. 9.

ALMOST all that we know about these wise men is to be found in very old legends. Clever scholars (and the venerable Bede was one of them) who wrote all they knew about them long ago, tell us their names were Melchior, Balthasar, and Gaspar. In the Middle Ages they were looked upon as saints. Inns were

named after them. Their names were used as charms to cure dreadful diseases like epilepsy, and some people were supposed to have been cured of poisonous snake-bites, by using their names. Whether things like this are true or not, there is something beautiful about these stories, and perhaps there may be truth in some of them. The three wise men came from Arabia or Persia—we do not know which, for certain—and were really pious old astrologers. They carefully studied all the movements of the stars, and believed that they could tell them things which they could not discover in any other way. One night they saw a *new* star, quite tiny, but very clear and unmistakable. There it was, glittering brightly in the dark sky, straight above them. Now every thoughtful and religious man in these days believed in looking for signs. Every great event that happened had some sign that came before it, if men could only find it out. When this strange new star appeared, something seemed to tell the Magi that it was the sign of the birth of some Great One. All good Jews were eagerly expecting the coming of a mighty King who would set up a Jewish kingdom, and bring them justice and peace and happiness, after the years and years of injustice and slavery and sorrow through which they had passed. So you can imagine that when once these three wise men had made sure that it *was* a new star that had so wonderfully appeared, they were

ready to believe that it was sent by God as a sign to them. They at once set out to see if they could hear from others what might be the fulfilment of the sign. Even as they started, the bright star moved also, and seemed to travel ahead of them. Imagine their wonder and their joy when 'the star which they saw in the east *went before them!*' Across deserts, over hills, through the valleys and the villages, almost too many to count, they went eagerly on—scarcely ever resting, because of their longing to know what the sign meant. Strangely they were drawn nearer and nearer to the wonderful little country of Palestine, whose still more wonderful history they would be sure to know. On and on the star led them, until it seemed to rest over the little town of Bethlehem. There the three wise travellers stopped also. Can you imagine how eagerly they would ask the people in the streets of the town if they had seen the star, and if they knew what it meant? Can you guess how longingly they would search in that town for the fulfilment of their wonderful journey? And they did not look in vain. They found *Him* and they *knew* Him. God whispered to their hearts, and told them that the tiny Babe in the stable of the crowded village inn was the Great One. The object of their long search was to find the King. When they laid their most precious gifts beside His poor cradle, I think God again whispered to them and told them the little Babe was the King of kings, and would

grow up to rule over the greatest Kingdom in all the world, the Kingdom of Love and Goodness.

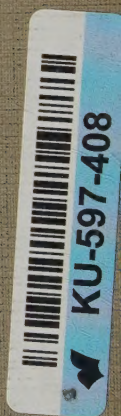
When I read and think about these three faithful wise men, I wish above everything else that I could have travelled with them on their long and wonderful journey to find Him. Then God seems to say something to me like this, when I go on thinking about it all. *There are still stars in our sky to-day* which lead us to Him. He is still to be found, if we set out to look for Him. Let me tell you some of the stars that guide us nearer and nearer to our One King. There is the bright light of our *conscience*. If we honestly set out to obey our consciences, and follow the guidance that comes to us, we never go astray. We are led along paths that bring us straight to Him. The more perfectly we follow our consciences, the more surely do we come nearer to Him, and hear His voice speaking to us.

The *Bible* is another 'star' which leads us to Him. Do you remember the man who calls his Bible 'a light unto my path'? The light leads us to Him. The pathway brings us always to the same place—where we may see and know Him. But we must use our Bibles. We have to set out to seek before we can find.

Another lovely light that shines in our sky is the light of *good parents*. I wonder if you ever think about it like that. How much we owe to a good father or a good mother! My mother may often

be the loveliest and brightest star in my life. I shall not go far away from God and goodness if I follow her leading.

Yes! there are still stars in our sky to-day which lead us to Him. Every good, noble, holy *thought* that comes to us, leads us nearer to Him. He sends those thoughts to us. He sets those 'stars' in our sky, and He says, 'seek and ye shall find' Him. The real meaning of every Christmas is for us to catch a fresh glimpse of every 'star which goes before us,' leading us nearer to Jesus Christ. Let us open the eyes of our hearts to see them. And let us obey the promptings of the love that is in our hearts and *follow* them, so that we may *find* Him.



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